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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Senior Research Staff on International Communism

1 August 1961

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The attached "think piece" was prepared for its own purposes by SRS in early June. With the publication of the new Draft Program for the USSR (30 July 1961) the conceptual framework for research on the "transition to Communism" in the USSR, which this paper presents, may be of interest. We would welcome comments and suggestions.

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Chief, SRS/DDI

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Senior Research Staff on International Communism

SOVIET COMMUNISM IN THE SIXTIES: SOME NOTES ON ITS NEW DIMENSIONS

Foreword

During the past five years this Staff has painted a picture of the conflict of systems known as the Cold War, which has been consistently more pessimistic and somber than the generality of public and private utterances. We have contended that most judgments of the overall Communist challenge - ranging from official statements to academic and journalistic interpretations - have been too conservative, at times, by a factor comparable to the earlier under-estimates of the Soviet atomic, missile, and space potential. Despite the increasing awareness of the vast Communist threat, there still exists, in our judgment, a strong tendency to overlook the new factors of dynamism which have been developing in the movement, especially since the crisis of world Communism in 1956 - de-Stalinization and Hungary - the subsequent stabilization of the movement and consolidation of Khrushchev's power in 1957, followed by the conduct of a great debate within the movement, especially between the USSR and China, which achieved at least a temporary resolution in the Moscow Statement of November-December 1960. Our basic thesis concerning the Sino-Soviet controversy is that the Statement constitutes a major step toward the acceptance within the International Communist movement of the principle of commonwealth (sodruzhestvo); generally it has resulted in a strengthening of the "world socialist system" and of its ability to conduct "protracted conflict" against its enemy, the "world capitalist system." This view is contradictory to the widely held belief and hope that the Sino-Soviet controversy contains an inherent divisive principle, which by skillful manipulation and exacerbation we may be able to exploit to bring about the absolute disintegration of International Communism.

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I. General Considerations

1. Free World analyses generally fail to take into proper account the whole body of Communist theory and practice, philosophy and modus operandi, policy and behavior pattern.

Western traditional thinking, too often based on 19th century concepts of international relations, has failed consistently to take into account two major realities of International Communism: (a) the importance of its value system and way of thinking, i.e. the dynamism inherent in the governing ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and (b) the recent revolutionary changes that have occurred in the methodology and organization for planning and managing the global struggle which the Communists call the "conflict of systems" and which the West calls the "cold war." It is unfortunate that we have no "Red Teams," whose task it would be to steep themselves in the strategical and tactical thinking of the Communists, and to know intimately their world machinery for implementing their conflict policies.

2. Bloc policies must be analyzed within the context of Communist long-range objectives, middle-range strategies, and short-range tactics.

Communist policies are triple-layered: the basic objective, the creation of the Communist World State, is immutable; to achieve major progress toward that objective, strategies are devised which in turn are implemented by a wide variety of tactics, often contradictory in nature. The differentiation between these three approaches is vital to the understanding of Communist intentions and capabilities. It can only be fully achieved by appropriating, for purposes of analysis, the Communists' own weapons, their ideological and organizational principles - hence the need for a Red Team approach.

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3. By far the most important present strategy is the effort to launch the "transition to Communism." Upon this vital concept, advocated by Khrushchev, rest all present Soviet policies; the other countries of the Bloc are following suit.

The ramifications of the "transition" policy are tremendous. They concern not only foreign relations, both political and economic, but also social changes, scientific developments and problems of bloc organization.

In order to enter the "transition," the three great "bases" on which Soviet "socialism" was built must go through a comprehensive stage of transformation to meet the demands of the new "communist" order. These three bases are described as the "material-technical," the "socio-cultural" and the "ideological." The transition is regarded in its entirety as a scientific process in which the many elements not previously quantifiable will become so through the discovery, adoption and use of the latest physical and social science methods and techniques. Included in these will be new and imaginative uses of mathematics and of cybernetics applied to the entire spectrum of Soviet and world-communist sociological, economic and political problems. Thus what was until recently mere hypothetical "science" in Marxist-Leninist terms will become the universally applied technology of the atomic and space age. What Marx called "scientific socialism" (as opposed to "utopian" socialism) becomes an infinitely more complex "scientific communism." This grandiose concept presupposes that solutions will be found for a host of problems:

a. Modeling of the new Soviet society of "demonstrable excellence" for the world to emulate.

b. Integrated application of all sciences and technology to the total society and economy.

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c. The creation of the "New Communist Man."

d. Perfecting a new organizational concept of the Bloc, leading to a "commonwealth of socialist nations" (sodruzhestvo).

e. Developing a "mighty technical-material base" (advancing technology and overtaking and surpassing the United States).

f. Displaying new sophistication in manipulating groups and individuals ("socialist legality," "socialist humanism," use of persuasion rather than coercion by fear).

g. Preparing the Communist Parties to take over from the "withering" state.

h. Winning over of the "uncommitted" countries, dividing Europe from America, and finally conquering the latter by attrition.

i. Application of the Communist weapon of "systems conflict" - the total integration of policy and propaganda, for which no counterpart exists, or can exist in a non-totalitarian state. We have suggested the term politprop to describe this amalgam.

j. Maintaining a powerful military structure and great stocks of nuclear weapons both as a psychological threat and as a usable force in case the non-military conflict tactics fail.

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II. Problems for Analysis

The above factors of Communist strategy may be studied under three headings: (1) Reinvigoration of the existing system; (2) appropriation of elements of strength from the antagonistic Western system; (3) absolute innovation.

A. Reinvigoration of the existing system.

The basic strength of Communism according to its own spokesmen lies in the "creative unity of theory and practice." Its ideology is not, as commonly interpreted in the West, mere abstract, sterile doctrine, but is a vital interpenetration of thought and action. The present Communist leaders, especially Khrushchev himself, insist that this harmonious and creative relationship is being continuously developed and advanced by the "vanguard of humanity" i.e. the Communist Party. In our judgment the reinvigoration which the Soviet leaders claim they are seeking must not be dismissed as mere propaganda or pep talk. It is a hard, tough, disciplined, persistent, long-range endeavor in which the will-to-power and social vision - however distorted - are intertwined.

The general program for reinvigorating the existing Soviet system includes the following important steps:

a. Restatement of ideological principles in such fundamental works as the revised edition of the History of the CPSU, The Foundations of Leninism, and a host of other less monumental publications.

b. Massive campaign to improve the quality of indoctrination throughout the Party and among the masses. Earlier efforts culminated in a decree of 9 January 1960 laying the highest priority on the vitalization of propaganda.

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c. Expansion and tightening of discipline in the Party cadres, coupled with selective purges of a non-violent nature throughout the system.

d. Efforts to streamline and rationalize the state organization and the various specialized hierarchies with a view to harmonizing their activities under the controlling authority of the Party.

e. Relaxation of Stalin's coercive principles - "terror" - and the substitution of discipline based primarily on education, persuasion, and "positive reinforcement."

f. Improvement in education, rationalization of programs and curricula, and long-range development of the boarding schools.

g. Rational approach to the problem of centralization and decentralization, especially but not exclusively in the economic field.

h. Orderly conduct of genuine debate on controversial issues, subject to the overriding authority of the Party, the sanctity of Marxist-Leninist fundamentals, and the binding principle of "democratic centralism." This type of searching criticism, within the broad limits which ideology imposes, has been most apparent in the economic field. A wide variety of practices which had grown fixed and rigid under Stalin have been subjected to critical scrutiny and in many cases to major reform: central vs. regional planning, the role of market, price, incentive, and other quasi-capitalist economic features; technical matters of business administration such as cost accounting, obsolescence, interest, amortization, etc.

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i. Integration of long, medium, and short-range planning of all types with flexible administrative reorganization and assignment of personnel; linear and non-linear programming, inventory of machine tool and plant capital, and energy resources.

j. Recognition of the existence of serious disturbances within the balance of the existing system, of which the most striking example is the backwardness of agriculture: renewed efforts to deal with intractable problem areas, abolition of the MTS, intensified drive to consolidate kolkhoz and extend sovkhoz farming, with possible future development of rural towns (agrogorods).

k. Tightening of central control mechanisms and cracking down on fraudulent statistics, economic "localism."

B. Appropriation of Western and Free World elements.

It is as yet imperfectly realized in the West that the Communist bloc has for the past four or five years been conducting a massive program of appropriating valuable elements from the West, including Czarist Russia. These range widely from broad cultural tradition, through scientific and economic techniques and disciplines, to specific processes and inventions. The whole East-West exchange program has brought a new spirit of openness toward values which Stalinism considered as alien and hostile to "socialism." The extent of study, translation, and abstracting, of Western works in all fields from the humanities through the sciences has become increasingly apparent. A few of the fields in which major imports have been permitted into the system may be listed:

a. The entire gamut of science, which in the Soviet concept ranges from the highest level of mathematical

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and physical abstraction through the other natural and social sciences, to what we would call the humanities.

b. Notable examples of a positive revolution in attitude including (1) psychology, especially those fields which could be described as neo-Pavlovian (possibly admitting elements of Freudianism via the back door); (2) cybernetics and a host of related disciplines; (3) behavioral sciences generally, especially those leading into advanced forms of pedagogic theory and practice.

c. The so-called humanistic disciplines, including history and the creative arts which, while maintaining broad and normative principles of Marxist-Leninist scientism and "socialist realism," nevertheless are selectively thrown open for controlled access by Communist practitioners. The CPSU, after some initial hesitation, has appropriated the term "humanism," distinguishing "socialist humanism" from the bourgeois tradition by affirming that the former leads to the highest cultural, moral, and spiritual values for man, whereas the latter has degenerated into an instrument of class exploitation. Communist spokesmen now boast openly that they alone have the scientific certitude of paving the way to true "freedom" and to a society of "demonstrable excellence." Thus, in the very act of appropriating and partially debasing our most cherished values, they have turned them into a challenge and a threat to ourselves.

C. Absolute innovation.

The first sputnik, October 1957, was in the eyes of the Communists more than a spectacular technical achievement: it was a novum, a concrete manifestation of what is intended to be an uninterrupted chain of breakthroughs, of absolute innovation. The fields in which the potential for a chain of "sputniks" has become apparent are not confined to

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the obvious areas of hardware. They include the whole broad field of "human engineering," the application of cybernetic control techniques, not only for the natural sciences and the economy but for the shaping of society as a whole. This process has already produced a heady intellectual intoxication among Soviet theorists. One youthful and influential enthusiast, Arab-Ogley, has launched what amounts to a conceptual bombshell - "cybernetics will replace historical materialism as the guide to social processes" (1959). This is stated more prudently by Academician Nesmyanov: "Cybernetics is completely in harmony with dialectical materialism."

That the prospects for continued innovation and rationalization are no empty boast has been attested by many Western specialists on the basis of both existing literature and exchange visits. It is said that in cybernetic theory, whole new areas are being opened by Soviet scientists, the significance of which our own experts as yet can only dimly comprehend. As the tremendous flow of scientists and technicians now established in the pipeline begins to accumulate, and as Academies and Institutes continue to expand, a vast reservoir of creative genius is being established which cannot fail to produce innovation upon innovation.

But it is not merely the creation of this vast reservoir of trained manpower which makes possible the achievement of sputnik-like innovation. The main source of energy lies in the dynamics of the Party's goal-directed activity, specifically in planning. The CPSU, through the integrated scientific-technological apparatus which it controls, is able to delineate a structure of priorities in which areas of potential breakthrough are mapped in advance of actual entry. Taking advantage, as we have noted above, of the most advanced levels of Western attainment, the Soviet research and development planners employ the deliberate technique of the "overjump." This is not the chaotic, impulsive "Great Leap Forward" of the Chinese, but a methodical pursuit of the planned quantum.

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The CPSU, through its control of the entire apparatus of natural science, as well as the favorite offshoot of the Central Committee, the Academy of Social Sciences, is attempting to achieve a total unity of learning and discipline, first within the Soviet Union, and then by extension throughout the Bloc and ultimately the entire planet. It is projecting operational research and systems analysis, employing cybernetics, mathematical and symbolic logic, and other advanced techniques to reinforce experimental work in post-Pavlovian psychology, linear programming and other instruments for the achievement of total social integration, under the banner of the "transition to Communism." The Communist ideologies have even added the powerful stimulant of pure Utopianism, the prefiguring of a Novum Organum, serving the concept of an ideal society, explicitly associated with the tradition of Campanella ("City of the Sun") and the other great Western social visionaries.

Conclusions

What does this three-prong approach to Communist movement betoken for the future conduct of the conflict between the two world systems? This much can be predicted with virtual certainty: All three aspects - reinvigoration, assimilation, and innovation - will be harnessed in the great campaign known as the "transition to Communism." The outlines of this program which will be adopted at the 22nd Party Congress in Moscow, October 1961, will constitute the first new party program since that of Lenin in 1919. It will be presented as a vanguard effort on behalf of the entire world Communist movement. It is essential that all experts, whether in the intelligence, academic, or other public communities, gird themselves for a searching study of this program.

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